

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

The claims are 1 to 10 with claim 10 being withdrawn from consideration.

On page 2 of the Official Action, it is stated that a certified translation of Japanese priority application 2000-208632 has not been provided. In reply, such is submitted herewith, giving the present application an effective date of July 10, 2000 which is the filing date of the Japanese priority application.

Claims 1 to 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Hiratsuka et al., 2000.

This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Hiratsuka has an apparent effective date of no earlier than July 11, 2000 and is antedated by Applicants' Japanese priority application with an effective date of July 10, 2000.

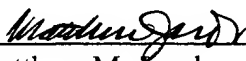
Accordingly, Hiratsuka is unavailable as prior art and the rejection based thereon should be withdrawn.

No further issues remaining, allowance of this application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

THE COMMISSIONER IS AUTHORIZED
TO CHARGE ANY DEFICIENCY IN THE
FEES FOR THIS PAPER TO DEPOSIT
ACCOUNT NO. 23-0975

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December 28, 2005